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orated by a passage in Middleton's *Michaelmas Term*, Act I, Scene iii, 381-3.<sup>7</sup>

*Easy.* How like you my Roman hand i' faith?

*Dustbox.* Exceedingly well, sir, but you rest too much upon your R, and make your ease too little.

That the ignorant have continued to regard R as the initial of such works are *argue* and *army*, is illustrated by an anecdote<sup>8</sup> related in *With the Connaught Rangers, in Quarters, Camp, and on Leave*, by General E. H. Maxwell, C. B., London, 1882:

"The adjutant of the Connaught Rangers, Arthur Maule, gave orders to his batman to have his initials burnt on his horse's hind-quarters. I suppose Paddy did not know what initials meant, for Maule, on proceeding with his batman to inspect the nag, found B. R. beautifully clipped and burnt on the charger's hind-quarters. 'What does B. R. mean?' said the astonished officer. 'My initials are A. M.' 'Arrah, sure, sir,' said the rather offended groom, 'B. R. stands for British Army.'"

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### VIRGINIA IN *Eastward Ho*

It has not been pointed out that in Seagull's extravagant description of Virginia in *Eastward Ho*<sup>1</sup> the authors made use of travelers' accounts of Virginia, found in Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations*.<sup>2</sup> The parallels follow:

*Seagull.* . . . For as much redde copper as I can bring, . . .

Hakluyt: 'Copper caryeth the price of all, so it be made red' (III, 255).  
'Our copper is better then theirs: and the reason is for that it is redder' (III, 258).

'We exchanged a copper kettle for fiftie skins woorth fiftie Crownes' (III, 247).

*Spendall.* Gods me! and how farre is it thether?

*Seagull.* Some six weekes sayle, no more, with any indifferent good winde. . . . Ther's a foreright winde continuall wafts us.

Hakluyt: 'After once we are departed the coast of England, wee may passe straightway thither, without danger of being driven into any of the countries of our enemies, or doubtfull friends: for commonly one winde serveth to bring us thither, which seldome faileth from the middle of Januarie to the middle of May, a benefite which the mariners make great account of, for it is a pleasure that they have in a few or none of other journeys.

<sup>7</sup> *The Works of Middleton*, edited by A. H. Bullen, vol. I, p. 261.

<sup>8</sup> My attention was called to this anecdote by my colleague, Professor H. B. Lathrop.

<sup>1</sup> *Eastward Ho* by Jonson, Chapman, and Marston [Belles-Lettres Series, D. C. Heath & Co.], p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> Published six years before *Eastward Ho*. Quotations from the Hakluyt Society's reprint, with references to the first edition.

Also the passage is short, for we may goe thither in thirtie or fortie dayes at the most, having but an indifferent winde, and return continually in twenty or foure and twentie dayes at the most' (III, 178).

Hakluyt describes the temperate climate<sup>3</sup> of Virginia, her abundant viands,<sup>4</sup> the free life,<sup>5</sup> as in the golden age, and ease of advancement<sup>6</sup> there, and the southern route<sup>7</sup> to the colony, much as they are described in the play; but the resemblances are not definite enough to justify quotation. In general, to observe that the three authors founded on fact even a sailor's exaggerated description of Virginia again reminds us how much writers of travel have aided dramatists and poets.

ALLAN H. GILBERT.

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#### A NOTE ON *Il Penseroso*

The references to Hermes and to Plato (*Il Penseroso*, 85-95) in the description of the night's reading of the contemplative man deserve more careful annotation than they have hitherto received. Editors more familiar with Plato than with Hermes have contented themselves with a note identifying Hermes, mentioning the association with his name of the Hermetic philosophy, and suggesting that the following verses refer to Plato's *Phædo*.

A careful reading of the latter does not, however, justify the annotation. Though Plato does discuss the probable dwellings of excarnate souls, he does not, either in the *Phædo* or elsewhere, describe the dæmons of fire, air, water, and earth, who are connected with the planets. His reticence in this regard has apparently been noticed by some of the more conscientious editors, who hazard a conjecture that in verses 93-96 we have a reference to some medieval speculation. Thus Todd suggests "some reference to the Gothick system of Demons, which is a mixture of Platonism, school divinity, and Christian superstition." This opinion is echoed by Masson, and by several other modern editors. To none of them apparently has it occurred that the reference is to the Hermetic writings previously alluded to in verse 88.

That, however, appears to be made evident by a reading of the extant Hermetic books. In *The Key* (14) we read, "Now from one source (αἰχμή) all things depend. . . . Three, then, are they: God, . . . Cosmos, and man." Of the Cosmos we are told (*The Perfect Sermon*, III, 1) "That, then, from which the whole Cosmos is formed consists of four elements—fire, water, earth, and air." Of the Cosmos, each of the strata or layers is peopled with daimons innumerable—"choirs of daimons," they are called (*Definitions of Asclepius to King Amon* 13). "And under Him is ranged the

<sup>3</sup> III, 279.

<sup>4</sup> III, 249.

<sup>5</sup> III, 246, 248, 269, 273.

<sup>6</sup> III, 153, 280.

<sup>7</sup> III, 281